

## Suffield Historic District Commission Minutes

February 5, 2018 7:30 pm

Suffield Town Hall

Chairman Mayne called the regular meeting of the Historic District Commission to order at 7:30 pm on February 5, 2018 at Suffield Town Hall, 83 Mountain Road. The following committee members were present:

Douglas Mayne  
Scott MacClintic  
John Schwemmer  
Margery Warren  
Brendan Begley  
Camella Beiter

Chairman Mayne, Commissioners MacClintic, Schwemmer, Warren and Begley were the designated voting members.

### Approval of Minutes:

Chairman Mayne asked for a motion to approve the January 8, 2018 meeting minutes. Commissioner MacClintic motioned to accept the minutes. Commissioner Schwemmer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### Public Comments:

Michael Santori, a Suffield resident, stated he wanted to attend the meeting to voice his support of the Historic District Commission in their endeavor to keep the historical character of Suffield intact.

Derek Donnelly, Town Attorney, informed the Commission that starting next month, the Building Inspector, Ted Flanders, would be attending the Historic District Commission meetings. It is hoped that this will help with any future procedural issues and enforcement of the historic district regulations.

### Report on 480-500 N. Main Street Subdivision

Chairman Mayne reported on the recent Planning and Zoning meeting he had attended. As discussed at the last Historic District Commission meeting, he presented a letter prepared with input from the Commissioners to Planning and Zoning. Chairman Mayne wanted to insure everyone was aware that the Historic District Commission would not officially review the Stonegate Subdivision, but would follow the project keeping informed as it developed. He mentioned that the Historic District Commission had spent a number of hours reviewing the State Statutes and guidelines but found that approval of subdivisions fall outside of their purview. Chairman Mayne informed the Commission that after listening to the general comments at the Planning and Zoning meeting, he felt that there were pros and cons to the project as it related to the historic district. Chairman Mayne stated he felt there was more clarity

on the project and he was impressed with the efforts of the Landscape Architect and her overall plans for the subdivision. Her intent was to incorporate plantings that would enhance the historic area. Chairman Mayne stated that since the first informal review of the project over the summer, changes had been made with an effort to address some of their concerns.

There was discussion regarding the access road and how it would be situated. Rather than a straight road, it would have an “S” curve which would conceal and hopefully soften the look. Discussion continued with questions raised concerning the number of new homes actually in the historic district. The Commissioners were told there are three existing historical structures which would be renovated and three new homes constructed in the district area. The three new homes could be styled to appear as historic homes. The outbuildings on the property would be looked at with an overall effort to preserve the character of the District. A question was raised as to the current status of the subdivision, and the group was told it is open with public hearings still scheduled.

Mr. Daddario addressed the Commission stating he wanted to enhance the look of this property. After he had met with the Commission in July and realized he could not move existing structures, the additional property was purchased. He showed the group and aerial photo of the property dating back to the 1930s. He pointed out the existing road at that time and advised that the new road would emulate that. It would be kept as far south as possible. Mr. Daddario advised that changes had been made to the subdivision plan in order to attempt to address some of the concerns of the Historic District Commission. He was especially pleased with the landscaping plan and the effort to preserve the trees. The firm, LADA, would be overseeing the landscaping and Mr. Daddario shared a report prepared by the Landscape Architect which addressed historical landscaping. He further advised that this subdivision would not impact the wetlands.

Mr. Winn, Planning and Zoning Chairman, stated with two Commissions working together as the review process moves along, a good overall project for the Town could be realized.

The difference between Town Ordinances that provide guidance regarding project construction vs State Statutes that also may govern certain aspects of construction projects was discussed. Mr. Donnelly stated that Town Ordinances can always be reviewed and perhaps revised depending on the circumstances. If there was an effort to revise an ordinance, that would begin with a draft of the changes that are pertinent. That draft would need to be forwarded to Mr. Donnelly, Town Attorney and Mr. Hawkins, Town Planner, for review. Once the review is complete and a revised version of an ordinance is ready to be considered, it would be submitted to the Board of Selectmen. With their approval it would be presented at a Town meeting for a vote. Mr. Donnelly informed the group that the Town Ordinances are currently being reorganized. Once that task is completed they will be posted online, perhaps by the middle of the summer.

At this time, Chairman Mayne suggested they move on to the next agenda item.

#### Review Issues and Propose Updates to the Suffield Historic District Handbook

Chairman Mayne asked the Commissioners to consider tabling this item to allow for further

research before discussion. The Commissioners were in agreement and this agenda item was tabled until the next meeting.

This concluded the business for the evening and Chairman Mayne called for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Schwemmer motioned to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Commissioner Beiter and unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted  
Karen O'Hurley

These minutes are not official until accepted at a subsequent meeting.